Firing by Pakistani troops

338. SHRI ANANTA SETHI: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) the number of people killed and sustained injury in Indian border villages due to the firing by Pakistani troops during the current year;

(b) whether the Indian soldiers have retaliated Pakistani troops action on those border villages; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) to (c) Details of the causalties caused on Indian side due to Pak unprovoked firing on the border in J&K from January 1998 to 15th November 1998 are as under:—

	Security Personnel		Civilians	
	Killed	Wounded	Killed	Wounded
AGPL (Actual Ground Position Line)	21	42	—	—
LC (Line of Control)	56	257	45	146
IB (International Border)	01	14	02	26

Our troops respond appropriately to Pak unprovoked firings taking due care that the incidents remain localised, no civilian casualty is caused, and our response proves punitive and effective.

Drastic Change in Defence Set-up

339. SHRI GOVINDRAO ADIK: Will the Minister of DEFENCE be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the news-item in the Pioneer, dated 1st September, 1998 under the caption "Army Chief for drastic change in defence set-up;"

(b) if so, the reaction of Government to the observations made in the press report and facts of the matter;

(c) the details of recommendations of Arun Singh Committee and action taken thereon, recommendation-wise; and

(d) the details of action plan drawn for total revamp of defence set-up to make it responsive to the changing requirements of armed forces?

THE MINISTER OF DEFENCE (SHRI GEORGE FERNANDES): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The restructuring of defence set-up, induction of new and latest range of weaponry, debligation of financial powers and incorporation of information technology in the armed forces is an on-going process based on suggestions and proposals from all relevant sources including the armed forces. Delegation of financial powers was made to Navy for revenue expenditure under New Management Strategy (NMS) in 1994. Similar delegation of financial powers has been made to the Army and Air Force in April, 1997.

(c) It would not be in public interest to divulge details of recommendations of the Arum Singh Committee Report.

(d) The process of multi-faceted improvements in the defence establishment is an on-going one to enable the armed forces to meet